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MEAT INSPECTION

The Protection It Provides

Agricultural Research Service
U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

MEAT INSPECTION

The Protection It Provides



For about a penny a month per person, consumers are assured of vital protection provided by U.S. Inspected meats.

This protection is given by the Meat Inspection Division of USDA's Agricultural Research Service. It assures that the 120 pounds per person of federally inspected meats we eat every year in this country are clean, wholesome, and unadulterated.

Each working day, Federal meat inspectors keep some one million pounds of unfit meat from U.S. dining tables.

Veterinary inspectors and their assistants pass on the health of over 100 million meat animals annually. Seven out of 100 of these have conditions that require partial condemnation; about 240 thousand animals are found totally unfit for food.

Each year, USDA meat inspectors also condemn some 26 million pounds of processed meat foods which become unwholesome. These foods include sausages, wieners, bologna, cured hams, canned



N-10140

This stamp of approval, "U.S. INSP'D & P'S'D," is the confidence-inspiring symbol of U.S. Department of Agriculture's Meat Inspection. It assures consumers that their meat comes from healthy animals and is safe and wholesome.

meats, frozen meat dinners, and lard—in various stages of processing.

Processed meat foods require constant reinspection. Even though meat is sound before processing starts, it can deteriorate or become contaminated or adulterated during processing. Meat inspectors condemn such foods before they reach the market.

Unsound additives—including spices and other products used with meat foods—amounting to more than half a million pounds annually are rejected by Federal meat inspectors because of contamination by insects or rodents, or because they are otherwise unsafe or unwholesome.

Federal meat inspection begins with approval of plant construction and equipment. Before a new slaughtering or processing plant is built or remodeled, specialists check the plans to make sure efficient sanitary and inspection facilities are provided.

Federal supervision and inspection continues through each stage of preparation of meat for





N-17226

To qualify for Federal inspection, slaughtering and processing plants must have efficient sanitary systems, good lighting and ventilation. USDA specialists pass on all new construction and remodeling plans.

market, from the live animal to the carcass and then through processing to the container and label. All labels used on federally inspected meat products must be approved prior to use. They are closely examined to insure that they are correct and informative.

Reputable meat processors welcome Federal meat inspection, which guards the industry against the occasional unscrupulous processor. Meat and meat products are easily adulterated. Spoiled meat can be made to look and smell fresh. Meat can be made to soak up tremendous amounts of water. Cooking time of pork can be shortened to prevent meat shrinkage, but the cut in cooking time may interfere with the safety or wholesomeness of the product.

Federal meat inspectors also pass on imported meat and meat products, and certify U.S. meat for export. Other countries accept U.S. meat products as wholesome for importing when certified as federally inspected and passed. An export market for more than 660 million pounds of meat and meat food products annually is thus assured.

Meat Inspection



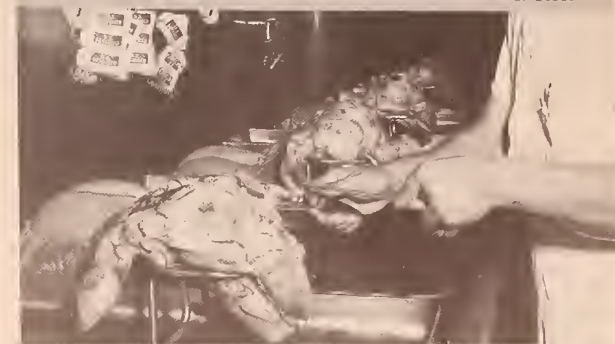
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Before slaughter, animals are examined by veterinary inspectors and trained assistants. Healthy animals are passed. Those that show any suspicious or abnormal symptoms are separated and tagged for special handling.



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Every carcass is examined by sight and expert touch as it passes the Federal inspector on the inspection line.



N-29350



N-29361

Veterinary inspectors and their assistants make a thorough examination of viscera, for any indication of infectious diseases and parasitic or other abnormal conditions.

This carcass is one of about 240,000 that were condemned during 1 year as unfit for food. Condemned meat is held under Federal lock and key until it is processed for fertilizer or inedible grease.

N-4683



Safe meat through scientific detection



N-33139

Federal meat inspectors oversee the packaging of bacon to see that the packages are not shortweighted. They also check on the cleanliness of plant employees, packaging materials, and the equipment used.

From time to time meat inspectors pick up samples of processed foods and ingredients used in the foods, for laboratory tests. Samples of containers and wrappings are also examined to assure they contain no harmful chemicals.

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Working in the Meat Inspection test kitchen, a home economist checks meat products to determine whether they meet required standards of composition. These meat food standards are reviewed periodically to assure that the various federally inspected meat products conform to consumer expectations.

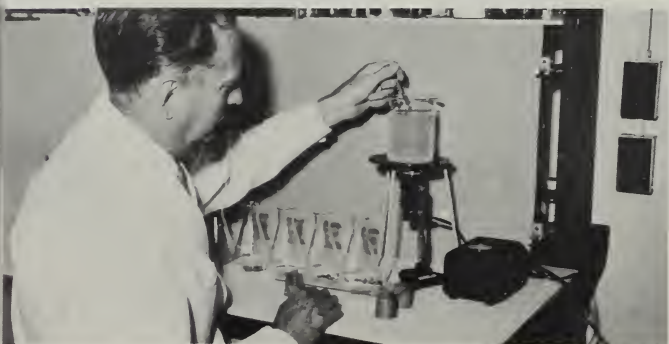


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Labels and sketches for use on federally inspected meat and meat products are reviewed to see that they contain the required consumer information and that no misleading statements or symbols are included.

Chemical tests of protein content, fat, moisture, and amounts of other permitted substances are made in this laboratory. In other laboratories, bacteriological tests are made to assure the safety of meat products.

N-17228



BN-9478X

Here a USDA scientist checks on the presence of minute residues of toxic pesticides. Meat and meat products are also tested for residues of hormones and antibiotics.

